

# Council Agenda

## 1<sup>st</sup> Week Michaelmas Term 2016

1<sup>st</sup> Week Council to start at 5:30pm prompt, with sign in opening at 5:15pm, on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016; Pontigny Room, St Edmund Hall.

We aim to make Council as accessible as possible, and ensure that it is always in accessible venues. However, if there are any accessibility requirements that we are not meeting for yourself or others, please contact OUSU's Democratic Support Officer on 01865 611831, or at [dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk).

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Matthew Dawe, at [chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk).

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
  - b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
  - c. Elections in Council
  - d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*), and Trinity Term 2016 report from the Scrutiny Committee
  - e. Items for Resolution
    1. Good Night Out campaign
    2. Supporting United for Education Demonstration on 19<sup>th</sup> November
    3. Refunding the LGBTQ Campaign for the costs of printing their LGBTQ+ Survival Guide
- Below the Line\*
4. OUSU Divisional Board Rep Appointments 2016/17
- f. Items for Debate
    1. OUSU Council voting reform
  - g. Any Other Business

\* We mark some items as "below the line" if we think they are uncontroversial – these will not be discussed unless someone in Council requests this, and at least ¼ of voting members present agree.

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### a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

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### b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

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### c. Elections in Council

**Deputy Returning Officer** - Assists the Returning Officer in overseeing elections and vote-counting in Council, and assists with any other elections or referendums. To serve for Michaelmas Term 2016.

**Steering Committee (x2)** - Steering Committee is responsible for compiling the agenda for Council, and referring motions submitted to Council to other committees for preliminary discussions as and when needed. To serve for Michaelmas Term 2016.

**Language Centre Committee (x2)** – University committee overseeing the University’s Language Centre. One position must be filled by a postgraduate. To serve until end of Trinity Term 2017.

**JSc(EC)SM (Joint Subcommittee of the Education Committee with Student Members) (x2)** – The principal committee for OUSU’s relationship with the University. Responsible for reviewing the democratic procedures of the Student Union, such as our elections and budget. One of these positions must be filled by a graduate student. To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017.

**Part-Time Executive (to serve for Michaelmas Term 2016)** – positions on OUSU’s Executive committee with a specific portfolio. For further info on the roles, email the Returning Officer who can put you in touch with the relevant Sabbatical officer.

- Graduate LGBTQ Officer
- Rent and Accommodation Officer
- Trans Officer
- Common Room Support Officer
- Mature Students' Officer
- Graduate International Students' Officer
- Graduate Women’s Officer
- Black and Minority Ethnic Students’ Officer
- Student Parents and Carers Officer
- Graduate Welfare Officer

**Rules Committee (x2)** – University committee responsible for making regulations for student conduct, including the regulations concerning behaviour after examinations. ***Students on this committee must have already been at Oxford for a minimum of three terms.*** To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017 (although the Committee only meets once, in Hilary Term 2017).

**Consultative Committee for Health and Safety** – University committee overseeing staff and student health and safety. This must be filled by a postgraduate in either the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division, or the Medical Sciences Division. To serve until end of Trinity Term 2017.

**Budget Advisory Group (x3)** – This group advises OUSU’s Trustee Board on OUSU’s budget. To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017.

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**d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*), and Trinity Term report from the Scrutiny Committee**

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**e. Items for Resolution**

1. Good Night Out campaign

**Council Notes:**

1. Its powers under Bye-Law 34.2 to establish new campaigns, if a Sabbatical Officer supports this and provides a draft constitution.
2. Its endorsement of Good Night Out in 5<sup>th</sup> Week Council, Hilary Term 2016.

**Council Believes:**

1. That harassment in licensed venues is an ongoing problem in Oxford.

2. That this harassment should not be tolerated and it is important that something is done to tackle it.
3. That Good Night Out has had great success in other cities and student unions, proving that it has the potential to help tackle this problem.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To create a new Campaign (pursuant to Bye-Law 34.2), called the Good Night Out campaign.
2. To endorse the draft constitution in Appendix 1.
3. To mandate the Vice President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities) to form an Executive for the Campaign and ensure the Executive endorses the draft constitution within a month of this motion passing.

**Proposed:** Rebecca Redding (St John's)

**Seconded:** Hannah Cheah (Corpus Christi)

2. Supporting United for Education Demonstration on 19<sup>th</sup> November

**Council Notes:**

1. The Higher Education Bill is currently making its way through parliament
2. The HE Bill contains proposals to increase tuition fees, and allow differentiation of fees between institutions based on highly questionable assessments of 'Teaching Excellence'. It also proposes to form an 'Office for Students' with no student representation whatsoever.
3. With parliamentary approval, Oxford University already intends to increase fees for on-course students in 2017-18 to £9250
4. The NUS (National Union of Students) and the UCU (University and College Union) have called a national demo in London on November 19th for free, accessible and quality further and higher education across the UK, and to demand an end to the marketisation of university and college education.
5. That a full risk assessment of the demonstration is being undertaken by the NUS.
6. That NUS have taken measures to ensure that the demo is as accessible as possible and there will be specific provision for disabled students
7. In 2014, OUSU Council voted to support the NUS campaign for free education and put forward £300 to the cost of a coach to the national demonstration. It was also passed by fifteen JCRs.
8. In 2015, OUSU Council contributed £300 to the national demonstration against the abolition of maintenance grants, also supported by numerous JCRs.

**Council Believes:**

1. Oxford students should be given the opportunity to speak out against changes that will significantly affect their access to education
2. The Student Union should enable students to engage with and inform education policy on an institutional and national level
3. In addition to current students, if implemented, numerous policies in the HE Bill would be exceptionally detrimental to encouraging access and widening participation at Oxford, disproportionately affecting those from marginalised and/or underrepresented groups who have are more inclined to be debt averse.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the sabbatical officers to organise coaches from Oxford to the demonstration appropriate to the number of people who want to attend or who we expect to attend.
2. To mandate the sabbatical officers to provide students attending the demonstration with information and support ensuring their safety.
3. To pass £300 from Council's discretionary fund to go towards the cost of the coaches, and to mandate the sabbatical officers to sell tickets for the coaches at a cost of £3.
4. To mandate the sabbatical officers to email the student body with information about the demonstration and coach tickets.
5. To encourage common rooms to pass motions for more supporting funds.

**Proposed:** Bethany Currie (Corpus Christi)

**Seconded:** Eden Bailey (Magdalen)

3. Refunding the LGBTQ Campaign for the costs of printing their LGBTQ+ Survival Guide

**Council Notes:**

1. That OUSU's LGBTQ Campaign put together and printed 200 copies of a 'survival guide' aimed at providing LGBTQ+ freshers with advice and support.
2. That the LGBTQ Campaign has a budget of £200 per term to cover all events and expenses.
3. That the cost of printing the Survival Guide came to £280.

**Council Believes:**

1. That the LGBTQ Survival Guide provides a friendly introduction to life at Oxford as an LGBTQ+ student, and will be a helpful source of resources and advice for LGBTQ freshers.
2. That part of the role of the LGBTQ Campaign is to improve the experiences of LGBTQ+ students at Oxford, and that the survival guide contributes to this goal.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To pay £280 to the LGBTQ Campaign to cover the costs of printing the LGBTQ Survival Guide.

**Proposed:** Catherine Kelly (St Hugh's)

**Seconded:** Tilda Agace (Wadham)

Below the line:

#### 4. OUSU Divisional Board Rep Appointments 2016/17

##### **Council Notes:**

1. In Hilary 2016, OUSU conducted a review of the appointment, support and role of the Divisional Board Representatives after consultation with various stakeholder groups. The result of the review was to move the appointments of Divisional Board Reps from OUSU Council election to an application and appointment based system.
2. In Trinity 2016, OUSU opened applications for the 8 available positions and interviewed a number of candidates for positions. Interviews were undertaken by the 2015/16 OUSU Vice Presidents (Access & Academic Affairs) and (Graduates).
3. OUSU Council are still required to approve the appointments.
4. Appointments for the remaining positions will happen this term.

##### **Council Resolves:**

1. To approve the appointment of:
  - a. Anastasia Tsikas as Undergraduate Social Science Divisional Board Rep
  - b. Oliver Rice as Postgraduate Social Science Divisional Board Rep
  - c. Zoe Firth as Undergraduate Medical Science Divisional Board Rep
  - d. George Haggett as Undergraduate Humanities Divisional Board Rep
  - e. Ayush Prasad Undergraduate MPLS (Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences) Divisional Board Rep

**Proposed:** Eden Bailey (Magdalen)

**Seconded:** Marina Lambrakis (St John's)

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#### **f. Items for Debate**

1. OUSU Council voting reform - Will Jarrett (Exeter), Harry Williams (Exeter) (15 minutes)

The current voting system used in OUSU Council gives a maximum of three votes to each college – one for the president, one for the OUSU rep, and one for the president-appointed third person. I think there are a number of problems with this system, including the following:

- No matter how many votes an OUSU rep gets from their college, their **votes are always reduced down to just one**. This is 1) undemocratic and unrepresentative, and 2) makes it very difficult for OUSU reps to convince people to vote.
- This first-past-the-post style of taking votes from colleges means that **significant minorities are disregarded**. For instance, if 70% voted 'yes' on a motion, and 30% voted 'no', the 'no' votes are completely discounted.
- As the presidents are able to choose who gets the third vote, 67% of voting power is theoretically with the presidents. This means that 67% of **voting power is out of the hands of the majority** of voters (the JCRs and MCRs).

- The third vote system could theoretically be manipulated to provide **extra voting power for unpopular or controversial motions**, which is wholly undemocratic.

I have an idea for a new system of voting, and I would love to hear opinions/ideas about how to improve it. My idea for a new system is as follows:

- OUSU Council would meet fortnightly, as is the case now, and at these meetings all motions would be discussed. Amendments could be made on all motions at this stage. However, when Council votes on any given motion, the vote is an **advisory vote only**.
- **College presidents, OUSU reps, and the president-appointed third** person could take part in these meetings, and get a vote in regard to passing amendments and in regard to the advisory vote.
- The motions would then be forwarded on to **the entire student body** by OUSU, via email, and they would vote on whether or not to pass the motion, with all amendments included.
- A second email detailing **the results of the vote** would then be distributed.

I think there are a number of benefits to this system:

- It would allow **every Oxford student a vote** in every motion.
- **Engagement with OUSU** would be much easier to encourage if people knew that their votes mattered.
- There is **no chance of an OUSU rep voting contrary to their JCR/MCR**, which is a possibility under the current system.
- OUSU Council can still amend motions, meaning that **debates and discussions are still central** in Council decision making.

I would love to hear general feedback on this idea, or suggestions for better alternative systems, or advice on practical elements of the proposal. I plan to put this proposal to Council during the next meeting, so any thoughts now would be gratefully received.

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**g. Any Other Business**

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**CONSTITUTION of GOOD NIGHT OUT Campaign**

- 1 The **name** of the campaign is Good Night Out (“the Campaign”).
- 2 The Campaign’s **purpose** is to raise awareness of the issues of harassment in licensed venues and provide training and support to licensed venues in the area to help them recognise and tackle the problem in their venue. The Campaign aims to tackle all types of harassment, but has specific targets to reduce sexist, racist, queerphobic and ableist harassment.
- 3 The Campaign is open to all OUSU's **student members**.
- 4 The Campaign has an **executive** which is responsible, and accountable to Council, for the achievement of the campaign's purpose, and for the campaign's good management.
  - 4.1 The executive is led by a chair or two co-chairs who are elected each year by student members. Each co-chair serves for one year from the date of election.
  - 4.2 The OUSU Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities) ('the VP') is *ex officio* a member of the executive.
  - 4.3 The co-chairs, in consultation with the VP, may create additional members of the executive, elected from student members. The executive may restrict eligibility to run for a position to a subset of student members where they consider this necessary.
  - 4.4 A co-chair, or any other executive member (other than the Vice-President), may resign, or be removed from the executive by Council resolution or under 4.5. The campaign appoints any replacement co-chair or member until a new election can be called.
  - 4.5 A member of the executive can be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the executive. Any removal may only occur if the member has been given at least a week’s notice, and has been given the opportunity to reply.
  - 4.6 All executive positions (except for the VP) should, where possible, be elected in a meeting which any student member can attend. This will ordinarily happen in Michaelmas Term, unless the executive decides otherwise. The election (including its timing, location and the voting procedure) should be advertised to all students at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
  - 4.7 Where an election is not possible for a position, as determined by the executive, the executive may appoint to that position for a temporary period of no longer than a term.
  - 4.8 Where all executive positions are filled by undergraduate students, the executive shall create an additional executive position that is only open to graduate students (along with any other criteria that the executive decide to add), to ensure that there is always at least one member who is a Graduate.
- 5 The executive organises its own procedure, including attendance, decision-making, voting and quorum at **meetings** of the executive. The executive may also call and provide for open meetings when any student member may attend and vote.
- 6 The executive has the following **powers and responsibilities**:
  - 6.1 The executive may organize events
  - 6.2 The executive must conform to OUSU policy
  - 6.3 The executive may decide which events to hold and which groups to work with in order to meet their stated aims

6.4 The executive may decide to prioritise or focus on specific issues in order to meet their stated aims.

6.5 The executive may set up subgroups to campaign on specific issues. Such subgroups may be set up and disbanded by agreement of the executive.

- 7 The chair(s), in consultation with the VP, must **report** each Term to Council on the Campaign's activities and finances.
- 8 The executive must prepare a **budget** each Michaelmas Term for the approval of the Chief Executive Officer. The executive must only incur expenditure where authorised by the approved budget or by the VP in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer. The VP has financial authority, and the VP will not refuse this authority for expenditure included in the budget.
- 9 **Complaints** will be handled in accordance with OUSU's Complaints Procedure.
- 10 Any amendments to this constitution require the approval of a majority vote of the executive, and subsequently approval by Council.